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Report of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 1999/54 of 29 July 1999, the Economic and Social Council requested the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), in close cooperation with the Board of Trustees, to submit a report to the Council at its substantive session of 2000 on the implementation of the revitalization measures of INSTRAW. The report is submitted herewith (see annex).

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Annex

Report of the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

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Introduction

1. At its 45th plenary meeting and by resolution 1999/54 of 29 July 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided to engage in the revitalization of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) based on the following recommendations:

(a) The core staff of the Institute should be constituted of a small number of persons focusing on coordination and servicing;

(b) Training and research should be structured in separately financed and managed projects;

(c) New technologies should be used for training, research and communications;

(d) Its web site should be developed to include categorizing and making accessible third party gender research projects, thereby also providing a channel to include the results of these projects in United Nations policy-making for advancement of women;

(e) An effective network of national and international research institutions should be created.

2. In paragraph 6 of the same resolution, the Economic and Social Council also urged States Members of the United Nations, and intergovernmental and the non-governmental organizations to support the revitalization of the Institute by contributing to the United Nations Trust Fund for the Institute as well as to specific research projects. In addition, the Council called specifically upon the Secretary-General to appoint a Director of INSTRAW and requested the Director, in close consultation with the Board of Trustees, to submit a report to the Council at its substantive session of 2000 on the implementation of the revitalization measures.

3. The present report is submitted by the Director of INSTRAW and it summarizes the critical steps that have been taken and will be taken in the next few months to implement measures for the revitalization of INSTRAW, as identified in Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/54, paragraphs 1 to 6. In presenting the critical steps for the revitalization of INSTRAW, this report makes reference to the following matters:

(a) Appointment of the Director of INSTRAW;

(b) Development of INSTRAW's new vision and working method;

(c) Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly on the new structure and working method of INSTRAW;

(d) Meetings with donors and other interested parties;

(e) General Assembly resolution 54/140 of 17 December 1999 on the revitalization and strengthening of the Institute;

(f) The 1999 annual United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities;

(g) Independent feasibility study on INSTRAW's Gender Awareness Information and Networking System (GAINS);

(h) Consultation with key stakeholders on the new vision, working method and structure of INSTRAW;

(i) Endorsement of the new working method and structure by the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW;

(j) Implementation of the first phase of GAINS.

I. Critical steps undertaken for the revitalization of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW)

A. Appointment of the Director of INSTRAW

4. In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/54, the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW, appointed Ms. Eleni Stamiris as the Director of the Institute on 5 September 1999.

B. Development of INSTRAW's new vision and working method: Gender Awareness Information and Networking System (GAINS)

5. Based on the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council for the revitalization of INSTRAW as well as consultations with different stakeholders and interested parties, INSTRAW developed a new vision and working method whose central element is GAINS. Using the GAINS system and methodology of work, INSTRAW will produce, manage and disseminate research-based knowledge to a wide range of stakeholders, users and beneficiaries. This will be done through the following services: (a) a comprehensive, searchable, interactive database on gender-related research and training; (b) the actual conduct and production of collaborative research and knowledge generation by a network of professional researchers worldwide; (c) a think tank on emerging global issues and identification of research and training gaps and needs; and (d) access to and delivery of on-line training and capacity-building. The provision of these services will be enabled through a variety of new information and communications technology (ICT) tools, such as the GAINS web site and pages, portal services for gender research and training, free e-mail services, chat rooms, discussion forums, videoconferencing and full service multimedia conferencing, groupware for collaborative research, on-line publishing, a gender-sensitive internal search engine, searchable database and low-bandwidth access support, access to translation software on the web site, and an access facility for users with special needs.

C. Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the new structure and working method of INSTRAW

6. As requested in Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/54, paragraph 2, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Board of Trustees of the Institute as well as its Director, presented the new structure and working method for INSTRAW, based on the GAINS system, in his report to the General Assembly (A/54/500). In this report, the Secretary-General stated that there was no international institution, to date, using a "one-stop" web site to bring together, organize, manage and make available gender-aware knowledge and information from the various sources scattered across the Internet, including sources not accessible through the Internet (para. 4).

7. Therefore, it is proposed that INSTRAW undertake this new strategic role using the GAINS system. GAINS is conceptualized as an integrated knowledge and information management system — a "one-stop", interactive, user-friendly web site, designed with a view to facilitating access to data and knowledge management services by government institutions, non-governmental organizations, women's associations, and gender focal points in both developing and developed countries.

8. Furthermore, the Secretary-General proposed that research and training activities be structured as separate projects and funded and managed separately from INSTRAW's core activities. The core operations include management and administration, public information, synthesis and analysis of research and training needs, identification of knowledge gaps and future needs, networking and effective partnerships. The conceptualization, design and organization of the special projects, including fund-raising, are part of the core activities. Accordingly, the requirements for the staffing of GAINS and other special research and training activities will be met by special-project funds.

9. Given INSTRAW's new proposed modality of work and structure, the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of securing an adequate financial base through voluntary contributions by Member States and other interested parties.

D. Meeting of donors and other interested parties on the new vision and working method of INSTRAW

10. During this period, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, together with the Director of INSTRAW, made numerous efforts to gain the support of Member States for the revitalization of the Institute.

11. As requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1999/54 and in furtherance of the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Special Adviser

to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women held an informal meeting on 24 September 1999 with representatives of regional groups, major donors and other interested States to discuss the possible approaches to the revitalization process of INSTRAW. Following this meeting and further consultations with the Board of Trustees and Director of INSTRAW, the Office of the Controller of the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts of the United Nations Secretariat, the Information Technology Services Division of the Office of Central Support Services of the United Nations Secretariat and the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, a special meeting of donors was held on 18 October 1999, in which the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of INSTRAW presented GAINS as the new working method for INSTRAW. The meeting reiterated general support for the proposed new approach and the revitalization of the Institute.

E. General Assembly resolution 54/140 on the revitalization of INSTRAW

12. The General Assembly, at its fifty-fourth session, adopted resolution 54/140 on the revitalization and strengthening of INSTRAW, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/54/500), the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (see A/54/156-E/1999/102) and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/54. It endorsed the decision of Member States to engage in the revitalization of the Institute and reaffirmed the unique role of INSTRAW as the only entity in the United Nations system devoted entirely to research, training and information in the context of the advancement of women in development. It also expressed its satisfaction with the establishment of the new staffing structure for the Institute based on a small core staff and took note with appreciation of the proposed new working method based primarily on the establishment of an electronic Gender Awareness Information and Networking System.

13. However, expressing concern for the persistent financial crisis of the Institute and recognizing the importance of securing an adequate financial base for the implementation of the revitalization measures, the General Assembly, in the same resolution, requested the Secretary-General to fulfil the commitment made to take the necessary measures to correct the administrative anomalies noted in the report by the Joint Inspection Unit. Furthermore, the Assembly also urged Member States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute or to consider increasing their contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for INSTRAW in order to facilitate the immediate implementation of the new working method of the Institute.

14. Welcoming the appointment of the Director of INSTRAW, the General Assembly, also in resolution 54/140, requested the Director to ensure the preparation of a feasibility study of GAINS, including the work plan and budget for the biennium 2000-2001 by independent consultants, for approval by the Board of Trustees at its next session.

F. Annual United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities

15. INSTRAW placed a great hope in securing the necessary financial base for its revitalization at the 1999 annual United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities. Unfortunately, the pledges made by Member States to the United Nations Trust Fund for INSTRAW amounted to only US$ 70,244. However, since INSTRAW's major donors announced that they were not taking part in the Pledging Conference, the Institute is hoping that their financial contributions for the revitalization will continue to be made in the course of the year 2000.

16. Given the financial uncertainty as well as the low level of current resources available in the United Nations Trust Fund for INSTRAW, financial planning and the implementation of a rigorous revitalization process become difficult at this time. It is thus imperative that the political support given by Member States at the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for the revitalization of INSTRAW be paralleled by their adequate financial support for the implementation thereof.

G. Independent feasibility study on the Institute's GAINS

17. As requested by the General Assembly in resolution 54/140, the Director of INSTRAW engaged in the preparation of a feasibility study on GAINS by independent consultants. The Institute contracted the services of Telecom/Telematique, Inc., a multidisciplinary international telecommunications firm based in Washington, D.C. The feasibility study was conducted during the period January-February 2000. The report of this study contained in document INSTRAW/BT/2000/R.3 was presented for approval to the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW at its twentieth session (4-6 April 2000).

18. During the preparation of this study, two of the consultants spent a week in Santo Domingo and held consultations with INSTRAW, government representatives, telecommunications companies, hardware and software providers and so forth. They also paid a visit to New York to exchange ideas and views on possible partnerships and collaboration. They met with representatives of the WomenWatch site, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP), the UNDP Learning Resource Centre, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the European Union (EU) and interested permanent missions to the United Nations.

19. The feasibility study states that transitioning INSTRAW's programme of collaborative research and training on women to the global electronic network is both feasible and essential. INSTRAW has the support and cooperation of its partners and stakeholders, and the commitment of ICT providers, to ensure that GAINS can be effectively and efficiently built and operated from Santo Domingo, interconnecting researchers and trainers with users in every region and any country.

20. The study assesses that GAINS is clearly technically feasible and with the appropriate support will be economically feasible. The technology is at hand with commitments of partners to assist in designing, developing, building and operating GAINS from the Santo Domingo headquarters. It is economically feasible if sufficient funding is provided to finance the content experts and technical experts needed to operate the interactive, collaborative system and programme.

21. As requested by the General Assembly, the feasibility study also proposes an implementation plan and a budget for its establishment and operationalization. The start-up phase to build the networks and web site will occur in Year one. Year one will have three phases: phase I, the start-up phase, which will focus on building the networks and web site, and creating the database; phase II which will focus on collecting the research in progress, and establishing teams of collaborative researchers and putting them on-line; and phase III, which will focus on site support and the adding of functionality. Throughout all phases, GAINS will build and connect its network of stakeholders.

22. The feasibility study estimates the cost for Year one at US$ 779,970. This covers the network costs, hardware, software, applications, installation, and systems development costs as well as the key experts to design and develop the content and launch the interactive, collaborative programme. It also covers 13 per cent overhead (or $81,678) charged by INSTRAW to GAINS, its special project, for all the financial and administrative support services and backstopping that the Institute will be providing.

23. Recurring costs for Year two and beyond are estimated to be US$ 770,198 each year as the GAINS programme expands in content, projects, stakeholders, users and beneficiaries. These costs cover network connectivity, applications, systems development and maintenance costs, and GAINS management as well as the expanded use of content experts for implementing the research and training programmes on-line.

24. Evaluation of GAINS is recommended in order to measure the main questions of the success of the programme, its goals, effectiveness, and cost-benefit analysis. This evaluation will draw upon significant new data gathered by monitoring network use. It will inform not only future GAINS operations but also other United Nations development programmes and applications of ICT.

25. After the completion of the feasibility study, a special meeting was organized in March 2000 by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Director of INSTRAW where the head consultant presented the

major findings of this study to the major donors and the other interested parties who attended.

H. Endorsement of the new working method and structure by the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW

26. The Board of Trustees of INSTRAW at its twentieth session, held in Santo Domingo from 4 to 6 April 2000, approved the feasibility study of GAINS and the GAINS system as INSTRAW's new working method for research and training on the advancement of women.

27. As indicated in its report to the Economic and Social Council (E/2000/58), the Board of Trustees amended the budget, phasing and implementation of GAINS as presented in the feasibility study. It proposed that Year one (May 2000-April 2001) should cover only two phases as indicated in the feasibility study. The start-up phase or phase I should extend from May to October 2000, and phase II from November 2000 to April 2001.

28. The cost of the start-up phase of GAINS is $215,000, which includes all technical and programmatic activities mentioned in the feasibility study. Phase II costs were approved at $340,000, which covers the activities mentioned in the feasibility study, with the exception of the addition of other languages of the United Nations which has been deferred to phase III, to begin in April 2001. The total cost of phases I and II for Year one is estimated to be $555,000. The Board recommended that INSTRAW defer the charge of 13 per cent overhead for the transition period until such time as the GAINS special project would be able to secure adequate financing for Year one; and also, that INSTRAW assign one of its professional staff to GAINS for phase I, absorbing the costs so as to reduce the required expenditures for GAINS at this critical time. As resources earmarked for GAINS would be obtained within the next few months, INSTRAW human and financial resources put into GAINS could be secured for its own core operations. For Year two and beyond, the Board did not concretize expenditures, determining that to do so would be untimely at the present stage and that it would be more appropriate to consider this at its next session, in 2001.

29. The Board also recommended that the Institute give priority now to the establishment of GAINS by deferring all other programmes and activities. It recommended that the preparation of the prototype web site of GAINS begin immediately in time to be presented at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century", in June 2000 and subsequently to the Economic and Social Council in July 2000. The Board also recommended that the Director be given flexibility at the transition stage to use some of the core funds of INSTRAW for the start-up phase of GAINS, until such time as GAINS could secure adequate resources.

30. The Board of Trustees also expressed concern about the persistent financial situation of INSTRAW and the lack of forthcoming contributions by Member States aimed at the revitalization of the Institute. The Board noted with great appreciation the few substantial contributions to GAINS and INSTRAW, particularly that of Spain, and the payment of pledges received from Colombia, Cyprus, Mexico, Morocco and South Africa. However, it urged that the Director and the Board continue fund-raising activities to secure support for GAINS. In this regard, the Board also decided to establish regional and national Councils "Friends of INSTRAW", especially in the European, Arab and North American regions, as a means to increase the visibility and the financial base of the Institute.

31. The Board of Trustees approved the Institute's core budget for the year 2000 in the amount of $870,500, its work plan and staffing. (see E/2000/58). The staffing approved is presented in the table.

I. Consultations with key stakeholders on the new vision and working method of INSTRAW

32. One of the priorities of the Director of INSTRAW was to increase contacts and confidence-building with key stakeholders and to keep them informed of every stage of the development of GAINS.

33. For example, while in New York in October 1999 for the General Assembly discussion on INSTRAW and the ad hoc meeting of donors and other interested States, the Director initiated a series of discussions and contacts with key stakeholders and invited their input in shaping the concept of GAINS. During this time, the

Summary of post requirements, year 2000

Section	Category: Professional and above							
	D-2	*D-1*	*P-5*	*P-4*	*P-3*	*P-2*	*Total 2000*	*Temporary posts approved for 1998-1999*
Executive Direction and External Relations	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Gender analysis	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	5
Administration and Support Services	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Total	**1**	-	-	**1**	**1**	**1**	4	**9**

Section	Category: General Service [a]			
	Principal level	*Other level*	*Total 2000*	*Temporary posts approved for 1998-1999*
Executive Direction and External Relations	1	-	1	4
Gender Analysis	1	-	1	5
Administration and Support Services	1	2	3	8
Total	**3**	**2**	**5**	**25**
Grand total			**9**	**34**

Note: Overall staff requirements reduced by 75 per cent for the year 2000.

[a] Costings for General Service salaries calculated as per United Nations applicable rates for the Dominican Republic.

Director addressed informally the members of EU and the Group of 77 and China. The Director also held bilateral consultations on the new working method of INSTRAW with some major donors and other interested parties such as Australia, Austria, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Greece, India, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Venezuela.

34. In March 2000, during the third session of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", the Director continued the informal briefings with the members of EU as well as the bilateral meetings with individual countries such as Canada, Colombia, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand and South Africa.

35. In addition to increasing contacts and building confidence with Member States, the Director focused on meeting and exchanging ideas and views with regard to GAINS with individual United Nations organizations, divisions and programmes such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the United Nations University (UNU), as well as the staff of WomenWatch. Special meetings were also held with the UNDP Information Technology for Development Programme, and the Information Technology Services Division of the United Nations Secretariat. As part of this consultative process and the establishment of closer links with the United Nations agencies, INSTRAW also made special efforts to strengthen contact with the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE). While in New York, the Director of INSTRAW attended two inter-agency meetings organized by the Special Adviser to the Secretary General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

36. INSTRAW also attended the sixth session of IACWGE, held from 23 to 25 February 2000 in New York, during which it was recommended that, given the revitalization of INSTRAW and the establishment of GAINS, the database on training materials within the United Nations system and the database on good practices of mainstreaming gender, compiled as special inter-agency initiatives, should be hosted, maintained and further developed by INSTRAW through GAINS.

37. The Director also visited Washington, D.C., and met with officials of the World Bank, the United Nations Foundation, the United States Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Inter-American Development Bank to discuss funding for GAINS. In follow-up, INSTRAW submitted a funding proposal to the United Nations Foundation as well as made initial contact with a few private donors, such as the Carnegie Foundation.

38. The Director also held various meetings with non-governmental organizations in New York, including a briefing of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women at one of its special sessions.

J. Implementation of phase I of GAINS

39. Following the twentieth session of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW, the preparation of the prototype web site of GAINS was immediately initiated in order for it to be presented at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, in June 2000. A local company was contracted to develop the front end of the web site. The Director made special arrangements with the Sustainable Development Networking Programme (SDNP) of UNDP to develop the web site structure for the global database on research, training and information resources and materials.

40. The staff of the Institute itself engaged fully in writing and preparing the materials and resources to be fed into the GAINS web site. One professional staff member of INSTRAW was assigned full-time to participate in the preparations of these materials as well as in the development and establishment of two of the main modalities of operation of GAINS: the Network of Focal Points and the Platform for Research on Women and Gender Issues. Other staff of INSTRAW provided various other services required for the development of the web site.

41. The GAINS Network of Focal Points now consists of National Focal Points and Regional Nodes. The National Focal Points are organizations that serve as outreach and feedback centres at the national level

in order to ensure that women, particularly those that cannot access the Internet, will benefit from the resources and services provided by GAINS. The Regional Nodes are electronic regional networks through which GAINS expands its outreach to organizations at the regional level. The main functions and connection to GAINS of both National Focal Points and Regional Nodes are described in detail in the report of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW.

42. The GAINS Platform for Research on Women and Gender Issues is developed as a worldwide collaboration of leading scholars, research organizations and networks devoted to the production, exchange and dissemination of research knowledge on women and gender issues. It is a permanent and dynamic "virtual workshop" on gender issues.

43. GAINS will host a site of the Platform that will serve as a gateway to its activities, policies and work plans, membership, research documents, abstracts, conferences, and so forth. Through this facility, members of the network will be able to post, store and access research findings, research papers and abstracts as well as engage in discussions and conduct collaborative research on-line. Non-members will be able to access documents and relevant research outputs, and register on-line for membership, for participation at a particular discussion forum or for lists. Conference papers and proceedings, as well as inputs from the thematic discussion groups, forums and task forces, will be archived within the GAINS database on women and gender-related resources.

44. Using GAINS facilities and tools, the Platform for Research will host global electronic conferences and will organize thematic discussion forums through list serves and e-mail discussion groups on emerging global issues, as well as on the implementation of the mandates for research and training emerging from the five-year review of the outcome of the Beijing conference. It will set up ad hoc consultative task forces on special issues with other key stakeholders (policy makers, development practitioners, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and so forth) for the integration of research findings into policy recommendations and actions for change.

45. The prototype of GAINS is expected to be presented to donors during the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in June, as well as to the Economic and Social Council in July. It is planned that its presentation will be followed up by fund-raising activities with Member States, donors and other interested parties in order to ensure the necessary financial resources for its continuation and full implementation. Furthermore, during the special session of the Assembly in June, INSTRAW will hold meetings with some of its Focal Points and members of the Platform for Research, in order to finalize their modality of operation and collaboration with GAINS.

II. Steps forward to implement GAINS and other revitalization measures

46. The process of the implementation of GAINS planned for the transition year 2000 requires numerous steps aimed at both securing the necessary financial base and operationalizing the system.

47. INSTRAW will engage in the upcoming months in intensive fund-raising that will include activities such as updating donors on GAINS implementation and soliciting their financial contributions, and operationalizing the regional and national Councils "Friends of INSTRAW" which will give visibility and fund-raise for GAINS, as well as exploring other sources and types of funding, such as in-kind contributions of hardware and software, secondment of staff, United Nations Volunteers, associate experts, and so forth.

48. The ongoing operationalization of GAINS requires: the setting-up of the technical base and acquiring the technical expertise for the running of the GAINS system; developing and moderating the programme of activities of the Platform for Research on Women and Gender Issues; developing the plan and implementing the programme of activities for training and capacity-building on-line; feeding, updating and expanding the database; setting up the programme of work and interacting with the Network of Focal Points; and establishing critical partnerships with United Nations organizations, agencies and programmes, as well as with other organizations, particularly ICT entities, with respect to working collaboratively on the full implementation of GAINS.

III. Conclusion

49. INSTRAW trusts that this report will inform Member States of its strong efforts with respect to revitalization undertaken during the past year, following the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council made at its substantive session of 1999. At every step of the critical path of revitalization presented in this report, key stakeholders of GAINS were consulted and their views and recommendations were taken into account in the subsequent development of the concept of GAINS. Donors, Member States and other interested parties, as well as United Nations agencies, divisions and departments, and non-governmental organizations, were individually and collectively briefed.

50. However, the Director wishes to call attention to the fact that, at the time of the preparation of this report, the resources available in the United Nations Trust Fund for INSTRAW for the year 2000, including contributions pledged for 2000, amounted to approximately US$ 1,092,000. Although this figure is expected to increase during the year because of the fund-raising efforts the Institute has been actively pursuing, at this time INSTRAW's operational commitments could be made only for the year 2000. This amount is not sufficient, however, to cover the cost of implementing phases I and II of GAINS, which is now INSTRAW's only special project requiring separate financing and managing.

51. However, despite the continuation of the critical financial situation facing INSTRAW, there are clear calls for the Institute to continue to carry out its mandate for research and training activities through the use of ICTs as well as networking and information-sharing. The Director takes the present opportunity to reiterate that, at this critical transition stage of restructuring, the financial and political support of all Member States is imperative as a means of maintaining the only United Nations entity solely devoted to research and training in the context of the advancement of women, especially at a time when all nations and sectors in the world are renewing their commitment, through the five-year review of the outcome of the Beijing conference, to addressing gender equality for the new century. If sufficient support to INSTRAW is not forthcoming in the next few months, all the efforts undertaken so far for INSTRAW's revitalization will not bear fruit and the Institute will continue to be threatened with pending closure.